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ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN CANAL,
LIFT LOCK NO. 6
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor
East side of DuPage River
Channahon
Will County
Illinois

HAER No. IL-101

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN CANAL,
LIFT LOCK NO. 6
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor

HAER No. IL-101

Also, refer to
I&M Canal, Locks and Lockhouse
Channahon, Illinois, (HABS-IL-157)

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Location: East side of DuPage River
Channahon, Will County, Illinois

UTM: 16 E. 397400 N. 4586240
Quad: Minooka

Date of Construction: ca. 1845

Designer: William Gooding

Present Owner: State of Illinois

Present Use: Recreational (Channahon State Park)

Significance: Out of the fifteen original, deep-cut
lift locks designed by William Gooding
for the I&M Canal, Lock No. 6 is the
best preserved.

Project Information: The Illinois and Michigan Canal was
designated a National Heritage Corridor
in 1984. The Following year HABS/HAER
embarked on an extensive inventory and
documentation project of the 100-mile
length of the corridor. Field work of
this project was concluded in 1987.
Final editing and photographic
documentation was completed in 1992.

Compiler: Gray Fitzsimons, Timothy Whittaker, and
David Kelliher, 1986

In consultation with the renowned engineer Benjamin Wright, William Gooding, the chief engineer of the I & M Canal, designed the I & M Canal lift locks in 1837. Gooding chose a standard design of fifteen, deep-cut lift locks each with a width of 18' and a length of 110'. The original timber lock gates contained miter sills, hand-operated pivoting valves that permitted water into the lock chamber, and manually operated balance beams. Most of the work on the canal locks was carried out in 1846-48. The lift locks remained in place until the 1930s when, after the I & M ceased commercial operation, the state reconstructed large sections of the canal for use as a recreational park. The Civilian Conservation Corps was extensively involved in the refurbishing of the locks, locktender's houses, aqueducts, and other canal structures.

Lift Lock No. 6 is located in Channahon, Illinois, on the east side of the DuPage River, some 45 miles from Bridgeport. The lock originally had a lift of 11.87 feet. Completed about 1847, the lock was reconstructed in 1885 and, again, in 1936. The walls are ashlar limestone with concrete used for patching deteriorated stones. (The repairs were probably done by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s.) The wooden lock gates have been removed, although some iron fittings remain and are marked, "Mall Iron Co., Chicago." A modern concrete barrier with wooden gates was constructed in 1956 at the north end of the lock. A recently constructed, wooden foot-bridge crosses the lock and provides access to the locktender's house (see entry of Channahon Locktender's House).

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